

Calvary Lutheran Church Constitution

PREAMBLE

We, the baptized members of Calvary Lutheran Church, responding in faith to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, desiring to unite together to preach the Word, administer the sacraments, and carry out God's mission, do hereby adopt this Constitution and Bylaws, and solemnly pledge ourselves to be governed by its provisions. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 1. NAME AND INCORPORATION

- A. The name of the congregation shall be Calvary Lutheran Church.
- B. For the purpose of this Constitution and the accompanying Bylaws, the congregation of Calvary Lutheran Church is hereinafter designated as "CLC".
- C. For the purpose of this Constitution and the accompanying Bylaws, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is hereinafter designated as the "ELCA".
- D. CLC shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Michigan.

Chapter 2. CONFESSION OF FAITH

- A. CLC confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- B. CLC confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.
 - 1. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
 - 2. The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

3. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.
- C. CLC accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.
 - D. CLC accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this congregation.
 - E. CLC accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.
 - F. CLC accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.
 - G. CLC confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scriptures and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.

Chapter 3. NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- A. All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of CLC are to be carried out under his rule and authority.
- B. The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and

through congregations. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.

Chapter 4. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- A. The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.

- B. To participate in God's mission, CLC as a part of the Church shall:
 - 1. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.

 - 2. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.

 - 3. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.

 - 4. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.

 - 5. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.

6. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.

C. To fulfill these purposes, CLC shall:

1. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.
2. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
3. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.
4. Teach the Word of God.
5. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
6. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
7. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the ELCA.
8. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the church-wide organization of the ELCA.
9. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with church-wide policy.

D. CLC shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the Bylaws. Additionally, the Church Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their actions. Such descriptions shall be contained in the Bylaws

- E. CLC shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs. The mission statement shall be an attachment to the Bylaws.

Chapter 5. POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

- A. The powers of the congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.
- B. The powers of CLC are vested in the Congregation Meeting, called and conducted as provided in this Constitution and Bylaws .
- C. Only such authority as is delegated to the Church Council or other organizational units by the governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. The congregation is authorized to:
 - 1. call a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
 - 2. terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
 - 3. call or terminate the call of associates in ministry; deaconesses, and diaconal ministers in conformity with the applicable policy of the ELCA;
 - 4. approve the annual budget;
 - 5. approve the acquisition of real and personal property by gift, device, purchase, or other lawful means;
 - 6. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
 - 7. approve any sale, mortgage, lease, transfer, or other disposal of its property by any lawful means;

8. elect its officers, and by so doing select it's Church Council, and, further, to require Council members to carry out their duties in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws ; and

9. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.

D. The Church Council shall select from among its voting members laypersons to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent CLC at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be selected by the Church Council and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in the Bylaws using guidelines established by the North/West Lower Michigan Synod of the ELCA

Chapter 6. CHURCH AFFILIATION

A. CLC shall be an interdependent part of the ELCA or its successor, and of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the ELCA.

B. CLC accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the Purposes of the ELCA and shall act in accordance with them.

C. CLC acknowledges its relationship with the ELCA in which:

1. CLC agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.

2. CLC pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the ELCA.

3. CLC agrees to call pastoral leadership from the clergy roster of the ELCA in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstances and with the approval of the bishop of the synod.

4. CLC agrees to consider associates in ministry,

deaconesses, and diaconal ministers for call to other staff positions in the congregation according to the procedures of the ELCA

5. CLC agrees to file this Constitution and any subsequent changes to the Constitution and Bylaws with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the Constitution and Bylaws of the ELCA and with the Constitution of the synod.

D. Affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be terminated as follows:

1. CLC takes action to dissolve.
2. CLC ceases to exist.
3. CLC is removed from membership in the ELCA according to the procedures for discipline of the ELCA
4. CLC follows the procedures to terminate as outlined in 6.E. of this Chapter.

E. CLC may terminate its relationship with the ELCA by the following procedure

1. A resolution indicating the desire of CLC to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.
2. The secretary shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of this congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
3. The bishop of the synod shall consult with this congregation during a period of at least 90 days.
4. If the congregation, after consultation, still desires to terminate its

relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the bishop of the synod or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.

5. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between this congregation and the ELCA shall be terminated.
 6. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of CLC and published in any periodical of this church.
- E. If CLC considers relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is affected.

Chapter 7. PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- A. If CLC ceases to exist, title to un-disposed property shall pass to the North/West Lower Michigan Synod of the ELCA
- B. If CLC is removed from membership in the ELCA according to its procedure for discipline, title to property shall continue to reside in the congregation.
- C. If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of CLC present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of the congregation vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in the congregation. Before the congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod.
- D. If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of CLC present at a legally called

and conducted special meeting of the congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body, title to property of the congregation shall continue to reside in the congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with CLC by the established synodical process, may give approval to the request to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of the congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of the ELCA.

E. Notwithstanding the provisions of Chapter 7. B. and C. above, where this congregation has received property from the synod pursuant to a deed or other instrument containing restrictions under provisions of 9.71.a. of the Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, this congregation accepts such restrictions and:

1. Shall not transfer, encumber, mortgage, or in any way burden or impair any right, title, or interest in the property without prior approval of the Synod Council.
2. Shall, upon written demand by the Synod Council and pursuant to S13.23.of the Constitution of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod, reconvey and transfer all right, title, and interest in the property to the synod.

Chapter 8. MEMBERSHIP

A. The membership of CLC shall be comprised of those baptized persons on the roll of the congregation at the time that this Constitution is adopted and those who join thereafter, who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution and its Bylaws

B. Members shall be classified as follows:

1. **Baptized** members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or, having been

previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other Lutheran congregations or by affirmation of faith.

2. **Confirmed** members are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.
3. **Voting** members are confirmed members of CLC. To retain confirmed membership in CLC, persons shall have communed at CLC during the preceding twelve (12) months.
4. **Associate** members are persons holding membership in other Lutheran congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of CLC, or persons who wish to retain a relationship with this congregation while being members of other congregations. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights, eligibility for elected offices, and membership on the Church Council of CLC.

C. All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Church Council.

D. It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:

1. make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
2. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran Church; and
3. support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the ELCA through contributions of their time, talents, and financial support as biblical stewards.

E. Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:

1. death;
2. resignation;
3. transfer or release;
4. disciplinary action by the Church Council; or
5. removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the Bylaws .
 - a. Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the Church has a continuing pastoral concern.

Chapter 9. THE PASTOR

A. PASTORAL SERVICES

1. The Congregation shall have the Authority to call a pastor by means of at least a two-thirds majority written vote of members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by this congregation to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
2. Only a member of the clergy roster of the ELCA or a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers who has been recommended to the congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation.
3. Consistent with the faith and practice of the ELCA:
 - a. Every ordained minister shall:
 - 1) preach the Word;
 - 2) administer the sacraments;
 - 3) conduct public worship;

- 4) provide pastoral care; and
 - 5) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.
- b. Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within CLC
- 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
 - 2) supervise all schools and organizations of this congregation;
 - 3) install regularly elected members of the Church Council; and
 - 4) with the council, administer discipline.
- c. Every pastor shall:
- 1) strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
 - 2) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
 - 3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and
 - 4) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization of the ELCA and of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod of the ELCA.
- d. The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.
- e. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop and for the following reasons:

- 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
- 2) resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
- 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
- 4) the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
- 5) disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;
- 6) the dissolution of the congregation; or
- 7) suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings.

B. PASTORAL TERMINATION - MISCELLANEOUS

1. When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or allegations of ineffective conduct of the pastoral office have come to the attention of the bishop of the synod, or when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official of the Church Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the bishop shall investigate such conditions personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.
2. In case of alleged physical or mental incapacity, reliable medical information shall be obtained. When such disability is evident, the bishop of the synod, with the advice of the committee, shall declare the pastorate vacant. Upon the restoration of health to a disabled pastor the bishop of the synod shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another assignment.

3. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the bishop of the synod shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the congregation. If the pastor and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the synod. If either party fails to agree, the congregation may, upon consultation with the Bishop, dismiss the pastor at a legally called meeting for that purpose. An action to dismiss must be by either (a). by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b). by a simple majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
4. If, in the course of proceedings described herein , the Bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action to the bishop who may serve a notice of discipline , in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws of the ELCA and the Constitution of this synod.
5. If, following the appointment of the Bishop's committee described herein, it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by the ordained pastor (due to local conditions), the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint synodical and churchwide fund and with housing provided by the congregation(s).

C. Pastor - Miscellaneous

1. At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the bishop of the synod at the request of and/or with the consent of this congregation or the Church Council.
2. During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Church Council. The interim pastor and any ordained

pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a new pastor.

3. This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor. A pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation.
4. When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation with the pastors, the Church Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
5. With the approval of the bishop of the synod, the congregation may call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be documented in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of the term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of this Chapter .
6. The pastor of this congregation shall:
 - a. keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation;
 - b. submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod; and
 - c. become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call.
7. The pastor(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
8. Ecumenical pastoral ministry

- a. Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, an ordained minister of a church body with which the ELCA has officially established a relationship of full communion may serve temporarily under contract as pastor of this congregation.

Chapter 10. CONGREGATION MEETING

- A. The annual meeting of CLC shall be held at a time specified in the Bylaws.
- B. A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Church Council, or the president of the congregation, or shall be called by the president of the congregation upon the written request of ten voting members. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.
- C. Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays or by mail to all members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice in the regular mail, with regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members shall be sufficient.
- D. The voting members present at a congregational meeting shall constitute a quorum for that meeting.
- E. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- F. All actions by the congregation shall be by majority vote except as otherwise provided in this Constitution.
- G. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation. The president shall exercise the option of simplifying procedures to facilitate member participation and understanding of the

proceedings.

Chapter 11. OFFICERS

- A. The officers of this congregation shall be as stipulated in the Bylaws.
 - 1. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the Bylaws .
 - 2. The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
 - 3. Officers of this congregation shall serve as voting members of the Church Council.
- B. The congregation shall elect its officers by written ballot or by affirmation. The officers then shall serve for a term as stipulated in the Bylaws or until their successor is elected. Officer's terms shall begin as stipulated in the Bylaws.
- C. No officer shall hold more than one office at a time.
- D. No elected officer shall serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

Chapter 12. CHURCH COUNCIL

- A. The voting membership of the Church Council shall consist of the pastor, the elected officers of the congregation, and such other voting members from the congregation at large, as specified in the Bylaws. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitations on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's seat on the Church Council shall be declared vacant if the member:
 - 1) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or
 - 2) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Church Council without cause.

Consistent with the laws of the State of Michigan, the congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Church Council in other circumstances.

- B. The voting members of the Church Council, except the pastor(s), shall be elected to serve for a period as specified in the Bylaws .

- C. Should a member's place on the Church Council be declared vacant, the Church Council may select, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting. Individuals who have served less than one-half of a regular term shall be eligible for nomination and possible election to a full term.

- D. The Church Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the ELCA. The duties of the Church Council shall include the following:
 - 1. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
 - 2. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
 - 3. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
 - 4. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment.
 - 5. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.

6. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual respect and understanding.
7. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
8. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide organization of the ELCA as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the ELCA
9. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the ELCA.
10. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

E. The Church Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.

1. The Church Council shall be the board of directors of this congregation, and as such shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Michigan, except as otherwise provided herein.
2. a. The Council **shall have** the authority to buy or encumber real property up to a maximum single transaction value of \$5,000.00 without the express approval of the Congregation.
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b. The Council **shall not** authorize the sale of any real or personal property with any single transaction value greater than \$2,000.00, without the express approval of and by a majority vote of the congregation. The Council is authorized to make such transactions when the anticipated sale value is less than the established amount.

3. The Council may enter into contracts for up to a single contract value of \$3,000.00 for items not included in the budget. For contracts greater than the established amount, approval from the congregation must be obtained before the contract is let.
 4. The Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation and shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption.
 5. The Council shall determine (by means of audit) that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer.
 6. The Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.
- F. The Council shall see that the provisions of the Constitution and its Bylaws are carried out.
- G. The Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.
- H. The Church Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this congregation.
- I. The Church Council shall submit a comprehensive report to the congregation at the annual meeting.
- J. The Church Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, and shall be called by the president at the request of at least one-half of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be delivered to all CLC members.
- K. A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Church Council. Chronic or repeated unexcused absence of the pastor or interim pastor from regular or special Council meetings shall be cause

for disciplinary action by the Church Council, following consultation with the synodical bishop.

Chapter 13. CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

In addition to the Church Council, certain business and operating committees are specified herein. Complete committee “Job Descriptions” and other committee information is found in the Bylaws

- A. A ***Nominating Committee*** shall be appointed by the president not less than two months prior to the Election of Officers held at the Annual Meeting. The purpose of the committee is to recruit and propose qualified candidates to fill expected vacant Church Council positions. The committee shall be formed as stipulated in the Bylaws.

- B. An ***Audit Committee*** made up of at least two voting members shall be appointed annually by the Church Council for the purpose of evaluating the financial activities and policies of the Church. The Audit Committee should be installed by mid January, so as to make it’s report by March 31st. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Church Council. The Audit Committee shall review the fiduciary practices and financial status of Calvary Lutheran Church and prepare the “Synod Financial Report Form”, providing a copy to Church Council.

- C. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a ***Call Committee*** of six voting members shall be elected by the congregation. The Committee’s activities will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor/s.

- D. **A Financial Committee may be appointed and be** composed of the Treasurer and other voting members as selected by the Church Council.
 - 1. The Committee may assist the Treasurer in the administration of funds and assets.

 - 2. The Committee may prepare proposed budgets to be presented to the

congregation for review, advice and approval.

3. Except as otherwise provided, the Committee may assist in determining uses of memorial funds, savings, and other special funds.
4. The committee might assist in interpreting financial reports, stewardship programs and congregational goals.
5. The committee would work directly with the Treasurer and operate generally under the auspices of the Church Council, Members would serve for a period as specified in the Bylaws.

E. **A Worship Planning Committee** shall be composed of the pastor and other congregational members who are interested in providing for a quality worship service experience.

1. The Committee shall assist the pastor in planning and implementing worship activities. These are, but are not limited to, hymn selection, orders of worship, liturgical resources, and altar guild activities.
2. The Committee will advise the Church Council as to alternatives for pastoral and pulpit services during vacation or absence of the Pastor.

F. Other committees of the Church may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Church Council.

G. Duties of committees of this congregation shall be specified in the Bylaws

Chapter 14. ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

- A. All organizations within this congregation shall exist to aid in ministering to the members of this congregation and to all persons who can be reached with the Gospel of Christ. As functions and expressions of this congregation's life, the organizations are subject to oversight by and direction from the Church Council.

The Church Council shall authorize such organization and appoint leadership for them as stipulated in the Church's Bylaws or by means of the Bylaws adopted by the organizations. These organizations shall make a formal report on their membership, programs, activities and finances to the Church Council at least annually.

- B. Only those organizations recognized by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or our own Church Council, may be organized within the congregation. Activities of such organizations will take place in our Church only after a proposal for such organization has been reviewed by and authorization has been given by the Church Council.

Chapter 15. DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

- A. Denial of the Christian faith as described in this Constitution, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church, or persistent disruption during worship or other Church activities are sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive steps:

- 1) private admonition by the pastor,
- 2) admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, and
- 3) citation to appear before the Church Council. If for any reason,

the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by 1. and 2. hereof, the president (if not the pastor) or vice president shall administer such admonitions.

- B. The process for discipline of a member of the congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The member shall appear before the Church Council, after having received a written notice of discipline. The “notice” shall be sent to the member at least ten days prior to the scheduled meeting, and shall specify the issues. If the member fails to appear at the scheduled hearing, the Church Council may proceed with the hearing and may make judgments in the member’s absence.
- C. Members of the Church Council who participate in the preparation of the written charges or who present evidence or testimony in the hearing before the Church Council are disqualified from the Council vote and decisions made relating to any discipline of the member.

Should the allegations be upheld by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Church Council who are not disqualified from voting, AND if renewed admonitions prove ineffectual, the council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:

1. notification of the discipline to the congregation;
 2. suspension from membership for a definite period of time; or
 3. removal from membership in this congregation.
- Disciplinary actions 1. and 2. above, shall be delivered to the member in writing.

- D. The disciplined member shall have the right to appeal any disciplinary decision to the Synod Council. Such right may not be abridged and the decision of the Synod Council shall be final.

- E. Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and reversed by the Church Council upon receipt of a) evidence that injustice has been done or b) the disciplined member demonstrates evidence of repentance and amendment.
- F. For disciplinary actions in this congregation, “due process” shall be observed as specified in 20.41.03. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- G. No member of the congregation shall be subject to discipline for offenses that the Church Council has previously heard and decided upon, unless so ordered by the Synod Council after an appeal.
- H. **Adjudication**
 - 1. When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the president of the Church Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of the synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

Chapter 16. Bylaws

- A. The Church Council may adopt Bylaws of the Constitution. No Bylaw may conflict with this Constitution.
- B. The Church Council or any voting member of the congregation may propose Bylaws which describe the function of the various committees or organizations of this congregation.
- C. Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any regular meeting of the Church Council, where a quorum exists and motions pass by a two-thirds majority vote of those Church Council members present .

- D. Approved changes to the Bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

Chapter 17. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

- A. Amendments to this Constitution must be approved by the Congregation and they may be proposed by at least ten at large voting members or by the Church Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Church Council at least 60 days before formal consideration by the congregation at its annual meeting or special meeting called for that purpose. The Church Council shall notify the members of the proposal, along with the Council's recommendation/s, at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.
- B. A proposed amendment to this Constitution shall:
 - 1. be authorized at a legally called congregational meeting, according to this constitution, and by a majority vote of those present and voting; and
 - 2. be approved without change from the authorized version at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting; and
 - 3. have the effective date included on the resolution and noted in the official copy of the Constitution.
- C. Any amendments to this Constitution shall be sent by the secretary of CLC to the Synod. The amendment shall become effective within 120 days from the date of the receipt of the notice by the synod unless the synod informs this congregation that the amendment is in conflict with the Constitution and Bylaws of the ELCA or the Constitution of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod of the ELCA.
- D. Whenever the *Model Constitution for Congregations* is amended by the Church-wide Assembly, this Constitution may be amended to reflect any such

amendment by a simple majority vote at any subsequent meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Church Council has submitted (by mail notice) to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod.

Chapter 18. INDEMNIFICATION

- A. Consistent with the provisions of the laws under which the congregation is incorporated, the congregation may adopt provisions providing indemnification for each person who, by reason of the fact that such person is or was a Church Council member, officer, employee, agent, or other member of any committee of this congregation, was or is threatened to be made a party to any suggested, pending, or completed civil or criminal suit, or administrative hearing or arbitration or other investigative proceeding.

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